

GARROW & ASSOCIATES, INC.

rec 13 Jan 86
Maurice
4000 DEKALB TECHNOLOGY PARKWAY, SUITE 375
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30340
(404) 451-0513

January 8, 1986

Mr. Tyler Bastian
State Archaeologist
Maryland Geologic Survey
The Rotunda
711 W. 40th Street, Suite 440
Baltimore, Maryland 21211

Dear Tyler:

It was with considerable relief that the Oxon Hill draft report was submitted on January 2. The "year of Oxon Hill" was the most intensive project run I have ever been associated with, and taught me what tight project scheduling actually means. All of us learned a great deal about how to organize and streamline a large research project during the past year and, hopefully, the next situation like that will be less traumatic for us all. It is my opinion that Oxon Hill produced an excellent research return for the time and money spent. We look forward to your review of the report.

Despite the amount of time, money, and effort devoted to the Oxon Hill site it is my opinion that we still have not excavated and analyzed a sufficient amount of the site to capture the research potential that the site contains. As examples, we have no archaeological information concerning the slaves, indentured servants, overseers, and tenants that occupied portions of the site through time. Further, although we have data from one side yard, we have no archaeological data concerning the manor house itself or the apparent nineteenth century wing additions. We do not know if the south flanking yard was used differently from that to the north, and we have no data concerning specialized structures in the formal gardens or in much of the remainder of the hypothesized manor house complex.

A highly significant gap in the data base relates to the nineteenth century occupations on the site. No nineteenth century features were found that contained a sufficient artifact sample for sophisticated analyses. We simply could not carry any of the nineteenth century deposits or features beyond the artifact pattern analysis stage, and that level of analysis is not sufficient to support more than general observations.

Our research to date on the Oxon Hill site has demonstrated that the site was apparently organized into areas that served similar functions through time. As an example, Area 6B appears to have contained barns and farm support buildings throughout its use history, while Area 6A originally was used for a plantation

storehouse and then much later as the site of a potato house for storing agricultural products. Area 5 apparently contained a meathouse in the earlier eighteenth century, and continued in use for nondomestic functions after that time. The Area 1 side yard appears to have been scrupulously maintained as a formal area until at least the point that tenants began to occupy the manor house in the second half of the nineteenth century. Area 2 received minor amounts of small and fragmentary artifacts throughout its use history, and the formal garden was kept as a well cleaned, formal space.

The rigid use of space at Oxon Hill certainly carries its own research implications, but it also means that it is more difficult to create a true laboratory surrogate of the site from simply investigating a corridor that crosses one side of the site. Fortunately, we do have some information concerning what lies within the site to the south of the project right-of-way, and a discussion of what remains in the ground at Oxon Hill will explicate at least some of the problems that remain with preserving a representative sample of this site.

Recent surveys of the Oxon Hill site have demonstrated that there are a number of apparent domestic sites in an area to the south of Area 6B. Those house sites are located on small sections of flat ground that overlook the ravine to the south, and contain both eighteenth and nineteenth century artifacts. Preservation in the case of some of those sites is sufficient that underhouse pads have survived, and it is likely that those house sites first sheltered slaves, and later tenants at Oxon Hill. An interpretation that places the slave quarters and later tenant houses in that area appears to be consistent with what is known concerning the site plan, and there is no question that investigation of those house sites would yield valuable research data available from no other current source.

The Addison family cemetery defines the western boundary of the hypothesized slave quarter/tenant habitation area. That cemetery has been recently subjected to archaeological test excavations, which indicated that approximately 30 graves can be expected to be present. Those graves probably span the period of the Addison ownership and occupation of the site, and includes several members of the Addison family interred there after the plantation was sold out of the family. It is probable that John Hanson is also buried in that cemetery, and there appears to be a certain level of interest in locating his final resting place. Historic cemeteries have become valid subjects of archaeological and physical anthropological research in recent years, and it is my opinion that the graves in the Addison family cemetery can yield research data available from no other source. If it becomes necessary to move this cemetery I feel very strongly that removal of the remains should be done by professional

archaeologists with the direct assistance of physical anthropologists.

Area 6A lies immediately to the north of the cemetery. The unexcavated portions of 6A contain the remainder of the plantation storehouse compound, and perhaps the majority of the potato house. The potato house cellar was not adequately excavated in the earlier study, as we came to the end of the field schedule and discovered on the last day that the floor of the cellar was much deeper than had been anticipated. Both the compound and the rest of the potato house beyond the right-of-way boundary could use additional attention.

Area 5 was located to the west of Area 6A, and contained the remains of what appeared to have been a meathouse and an ambiguous later structure. The meathouse foundations continued past the right-of-way boundary to the south, and could not be completed during the earlier study. Also, there is a large depression past the right-of-way boundary to the south that was probably an icehouse pit. Excavation of the depression and the rest of the "meat house" certainly can clarify the function of the area and details of subsistence strategies within the plantation through time.

Earlier surveys have demonstrated that there is a driveway paved with cobble stones in the area between the boundaries of Area 6A and the Addison family cemetery and the manor house ruin. I do not feel that much could be accomplished by excavating sections of the cobble road.

The manor house ruin represents a highly visible and significant cultural resource. That ruin probably reflects one of the earliest Georgian style manor houses constructed in the Mid Atlantic region, and investigation of that ruin and its surrounding area will yield research data available from no other sources. We do have eighteenth century inventories of the contents of the manor house at three points in time, two photographs of the exterior facades of the structure from the second half of the nineteenth century, and one nineteenth century photograph of part of the interior. That is about all that exists concerning the manor house besides what is locked up in the ground. The manor house ruin is a rare resource that should be carefully excavated and researched prior to its destruction.

The formal garden area also contains apparent resource types that were not investigated during the last data recovery project. There seem to be at least three structural areas within the area from the manor house ruin to the western edge of the bluff, and nothing is known concerning the function(s) of those ruins. Further, the previous project investigated a portion of the formal garden that was apparently maintained as a formal lawn or bowling green, and that area was probably not

representative of the formal garden as a whole. A great deal of additional excavation can be conducted in the formal garden area without the risk of doing redundant research.

It is my feeling that the investigation of the remainder of the Oxon Hill site can be conducted under the same research design used for the "S Curve" portion. The research questions posed in that research design remain valid areas of inquiry, and probably could be adequately addressed by looking at the entire site. I strongly feel that although the initial project recovered a number of key pieces of the Oxon Hill puzzle, the remaining pieces that are critical to understanding and documenting the whole site remain locked up in the ground.

I hope that the impressions that I have on the remainder of the site will help you and your staff better understand what I view as some of the shortcomings of the Oxon Hill data recovery project. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have additional questions concerning the site.

Sincerely,

GARROW & ASSOCIATES, INC.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pat", is positioned above the typed name.

Patrick H. Garrow
Executive Vice President

GARROW & ASSOCIATES, INC.

4000 DEKALB TECHNOLOGY PARKWAY, SUITE 375
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30340
(404) 451-0513

10 January 1986

Mr. Tyler Bastian
State Archaeologist
Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Geological Survey, The Rotunda
711 West 40th St., Suite 440
Baltimore, MD 21211

Dear Tyler:

We are in the process of securing the boxes for final curation/shipment of the Oxon Hill Project artifacts to you in Baltimore and there are a few items on which we need direction. While we are not planning to make shipment right away since we may need to look at particular pieces again after we receive your comments on the draft report, we do need to take advantage of some of the project people who are still here to do the packing.

We plan to make shipment by motor freight since there will be quite a number of boxes and the weight will also be substantial. Is that satisfactory? If so, do you have any special instructions for interior packing? We also need to know the specific address to which this many boxes can be delivered.

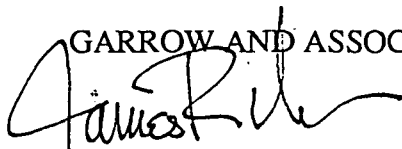
Since we are getting boxes to your specifications, I assume each box should be marked as to content in a manner uniform with your existing system so that they will not have to be remarked by your people prior to their final disposition. Those are detailed instructions that we need as soon as possible.

The last item concerns what type of information you want on the acid free paper labels that are put into the bags containing minimum vessels. Will just the site number and vessel number be sufficient or do we need to add the proveniences of the vessel (actually the proveniences of the sherds which make up the minimum vessel)?

If you would advise us in these matters at your earliest convenience, we would appreciate it. Thanks for your help.

Sincerely,

GARROW AND ASSOCIATES, INC.



James R. Wilson
Vice President
Oxon Hill Project Manager

File
Maurer

DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT
DIVISION OF CULTURAL RESOURCES
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Division of Archeology
338-7236

27 February 1986

Mr. Louis H. Ege, Jr.
Deputy Director
Division of Project Development
State Highway Administration
P.O. Box 717/707 North Calvert Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21203-0717

Dear Mr. Ege:

Per your request, we have reviewed the report "I-95/MD 210/I-295 Oxon Hill Manor Archeological Site Mitigation Project" prepared by Garrow and Associates, Inc. Considering the amount of work accomplished on this complex project within the last year, Garrow and Associates are to be congratulated on a well-written and comprehensive report. The comments provided below seek amplification of five major areas of concern that are not fully explicated in the draft. Additional comments aimed at improving the clarity of the overall discussion are being provided on the attached addendum. Our copy of the draft report, with the typographical errors, etc., marked in the text, is being returned directly to Garrow and Associates.

The "Introduction" (Chapter 1) needs to provide a physical setting and description of the site (located on a spur above the Potomac, etc.), a summary of what was done at the site (previous and present fieldwork, emphasizing that only a portion of the site was examined), and a summary of what was found. Of particular help to the uninformed would be an "interpretive summary" for the entire site as presently known; a more detailed site environs map could be used in conjunction with this summary to orient readers to the site. Also, much of existing Chapter 1 would fit more appropriately in Chapter 5, "Field and Laboratory Methodology."

Of prime concern is the near-total reliance on mean ceramic dating (MCD) for temporal problems. While MCD is a valid and useful technique, the report should make more use of other chronological data (such as bracket dates and pipestem dates) to allow independent evaluation. Furthermore, especially in

the discussion of individual features and specific stratigraphic contexts, terminus post quem (TPQ) dates need to be stated as outlined in Garrow's technical proposal. A MCD of 1750 may mean little if the feature also contains a sherd dictating a TPQ date of 1880. Perhaps a table listing MCD, bracket dates, pipestem dates, and TPQ dates for each feature/area would be the most economical way of presenting these data. Also concerning chronological data, there is a tendency in the report to lump data as if the site were single-component. Consideration should be given to the possibility that features/areas were used differently at different times. Breaking these down into at least 18th vs. 19th century units would seem appropriate.

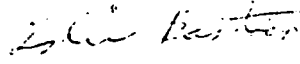
Another problem which can perhaps be addressed using entabulated data is that of enumerating artifacts for features/areas not discussed in detail in the report. For instance, the prehistoric artifacts from the buried A horizon in Area IV, and the artifacts recovered from Areas VIc and VId, need to be represented. This will allow independent evaluation of the data as well as serving as a permanent record of the findings.

Several aspects of the Area I discussion require clarification. The location of the road trace (north of Area I) should be illustrated and the age of the road should be estimated; in a similar light, it should be specified that the current access road dates to the 1960s. All features in Area I (as well as in Area VIb) need to be described and/or entabled, even if to simply dismiss a feature as a rodent burrow. With respect to structural posthole/molds, bottom elevations (below datum) for the postholes and molds, combined with TPQ dates from both postholes and molds, may strengthen arguments for relating individual holes/molds to a structure, and possibly identify others. And finally, the notion that the sideyard was landscaped in the 19th century needs to be better argued. What is the archeological evidence for landscaping? If the overburden from the landscaped sideyard was used to fill the nearby cellar, why the lack of (especially early) artifacts in the fill? And why did predictably shallow, fragile features such as planting holes and ditches survive this landscaping?

The final major comment concerns the marketing analysis proposed in the technical proposal. Surely the 300-some partially complete vessels from Area I are sufficient to attempt the analysis, even if only on a general level. This, in turn, can be used to bolster the discussion of the Addison family's socio-economic standing.

As we have already stated, the report represents the culmination of work of obvious quality. We hope that addressing the points mentioned above will serve to enhance that quality. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,



Tyler Bastian
State Archeologist

TB:lw

cc: Simpson
Suffness
Garrow
Little

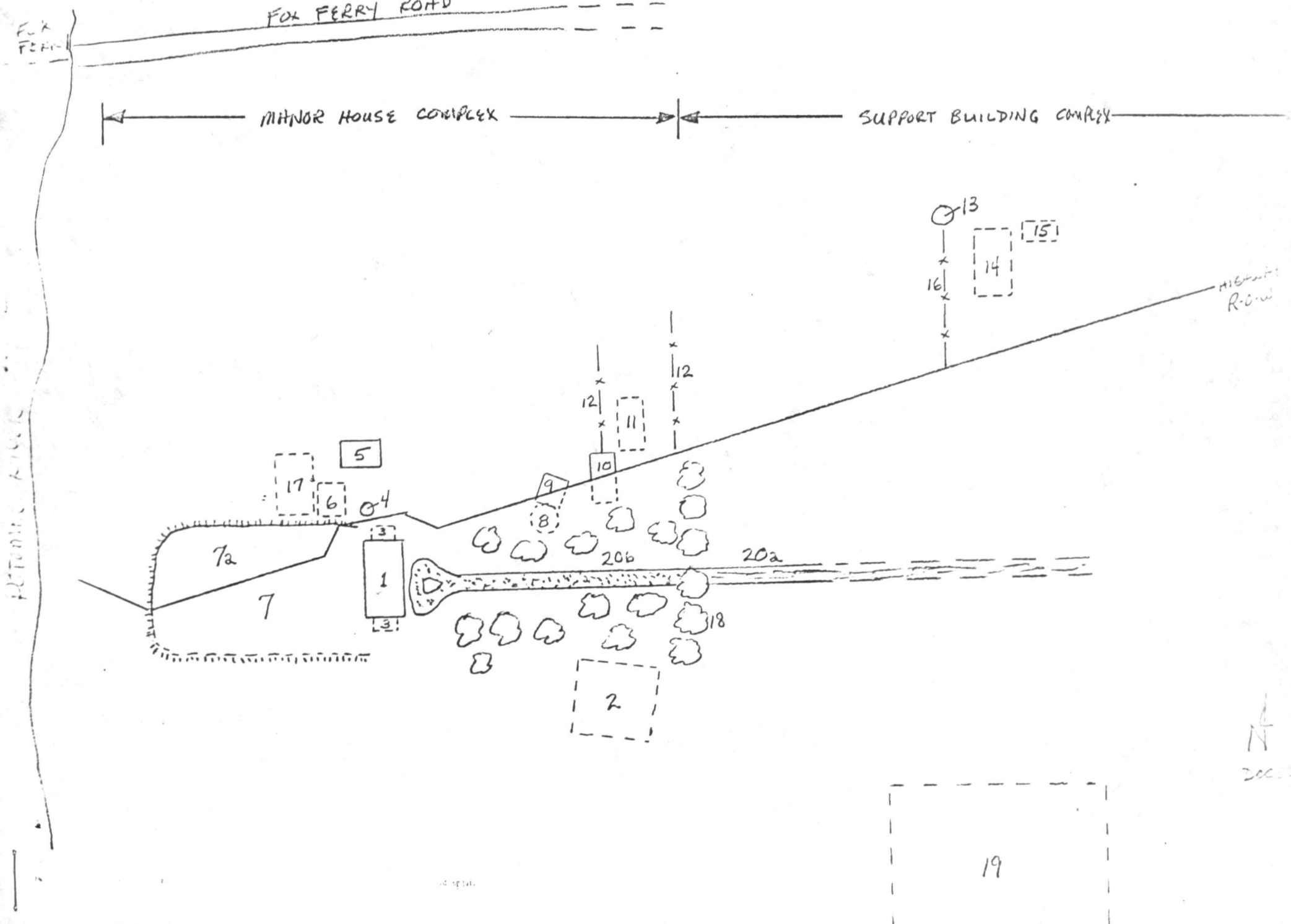
Note: The Garrow report was reviewed by Curry, Kavanagh, Hurry, and myself. Discussions and written comments by the reviewers were incorporated by Curry into this letter and addendum, which were in turn reviewed and approved by the others. TB.

ADDENDUM

Additional Comments on Oxon Hill Report

1. Perhaps merely stating the various hypotheses at first, without explaining why they could not be tested, would be better. This would eliminate something of a defeatist attitude that now exists in the introduction and may lead readers to think that nothing was found. Later, during discussion of the data recovered, you can present the issue of why various hypotheses could not be adequately addressed, and present the research questions that were addressed instead. Also, in addition to the specifically stated hypotheses, it might be useful to list some more general goals that were set for the project.
2. Move other negative comments from the introduction (e.g., "We couldn't water-screen because we couldn't get electricity", etc.) and present in a less negative way in a "constraints" section at the end of Chapter 5 (Methodology).
3. The square and feature numbering systems need to be explained.
4. Where specific people authored individual chapters or appendices (e.g., Historical Research, Faunal Analysis), it would seem appropriate to acknowledge them with a byline.
5. The report lacks an abstract.
6. It needs to be made clear that Grid North is shown on all maps and that it is 10 degrees west of Magnetic North.
7. In Area I relate structural features in terms of distance from and orientation with the manor house.
8. Area II - give MCD for 2x2 blocks to determine any artifact patterning. Also total quantities of 18th vs. 19th century deposits should be discussed in terms of intensity of utilization of Area II.
9. (p.VII-153) State whether modern material is included in the totals as this would skew the MCD.
10. Some interpretation of the sequence of events in Area IV should be included in summary. Evidence suggests that area was landscaped (when). The drains were constructed (when). Features recovered suggest use of the area as (open space?). A large pear tree est. 150+ years is on edge of terrace. 3 large trees on 1863 map., etc.
11. Area VIa is (was) not as totally eroded as implied in the discussion. Most of the erosion was confined to north of the access road.
12. The argument for a palisade around the storehouse compound is unsupported by archeological data. While it seems clear that activities were delineated by the two trench features, the palisade seems purely conjectural. A strong argument for fencing would be post and/or board molds, and if the artifact density from just inside to just outside varies dramatically (give figures).
13. VI-79 (Area VIa) why not residential/domestic use? Artifacts from screened units 6145, 6117, 6133, and 6161 should relate directly to structure and its function.
14. VI-81 (Area VIa) the large amount of ceramics and tobacco pipe fragments suggests multiple functions through time for this area, some of which may have been domestic. Some temporal analysis of artifacts might reveal more about activity patterns.
15. As attempted in Figure VI-46 for the 1863 barn, it would be informative if other structures depicted on historic maps were scaled to, and included on, a map of the structures identified archeologically.
16. In the References and text (?), Mackintosh should be cited as Anonymous.

17. VIII-24 (Faunal Anal.) There is not much change from lower to upper well in terms of the proportion of domestic edible meat weight over total edible meat weight. Lower sample = 65%; upper = 67.7%. In lower sample 93% of edible mammal meat is domestic, in upper sample 97.8% is domestic. Primary difference is presence of chicken in upper level.
18. Tables VIII-8 and VIII-9 are missing.
19. Describe flotation procedure - field, lab, size of mesh, quantities and proveniences floated, proveniences analyzed, provenience "sampled" vs. total recovery. Floral remains besides seeds?
20. Chap X - icehouse pit cannot be used as an argument for meathouse as its function was never determined and, according to the fieldwork, the "icehouse" postdated demolition of the meathouse.
21. X-8 If cemetery, "meathouse", and manor house form a triangle, could this not be indicative of the trinal symbolism of the "Georgian Mind Set"?
22. X-12 Is the decline of John Addison's estate vis-a-vis his father's a function of economic change or is it a result of his father's estate being parceled out to other heirs? Thomas Addison I was an only child so he received all of the lands acquired by his father (John Addison I).
23. X-13 Leone would say that conspicuous consumption and display of wealth by the later Thomas Addison was probably greater than John Addison or Thomas Addison I since he was using his wealth to add things that were more visible and public (new parlor furniture, liveried outriders, goldheaded cane, etc.) to maintain the more rigid hierarchy which had developed by the eve of the Revolution.
24. X Presence of "art" (i.e. paintings) is very indicative of "Georgian mind set" i.e. control of the universe and taming nature by capturing its essence and bringing it inside. Such art is extremely rare in 18th-century probates (see Inventory, Appendix 3).
25. App. 3-30 Could not the structure in Area V ("meathouse") equally be a milkhouse which also appears in the 1765 inventory? The milkhouse had beef stored in it at that time. Additionally, doesn't the presence of animal bone in this structure indicate discard activity rather than storage? A partially subterranean structure when disassembled or burned makes an ideal location for trash disposal. Were quantities of nails recovered from the area, and, more importantly, were the nails burned? Why were only 1/3 of the bones burned? Do we have a pattern of discard activity or use? What was in the postmolds versus the holes? This could provide construction and demolition dates.
26. The summary discussion in Chapter 10 could benefit from a sketch map (see attached example) showing the conjectural layout of the site--based on historical research, archeological data, and inference or speculation.
27. The source of the three probate inventories is variously attributed; the correct source is Maryland State Archives.



CAPTION FOR SUGGESTED FIGURE TO ACCOMPANY CHAPTER X DISCUSSION

- 1 - Oxon Hill Manor house (1710/11-1895)
- 2 - Addison family cemetery ()
- 3 - manor house wings ()
- 4 - 18th century well
- 5 - structure/cellar ()
- 6 - post-in-the-ground structure ()
- 7 - terraced formal garden (a: formal lawn or bowling green)
- 8 - icehouse
- 9 - meat house
- 10 - potato barn ()/Sumner Welles trash deposit
- 11 - storehouse ()
- 12 - vertical plank fence
- 13 - brick-lined well
- 14 - possible barn (1863?)
- 15 - possible structure
- 16 - fence
- 17 - herb/flower garden
- 18 - east edge of grove of trees shown on 1863 map
- 19 - house sites (slave quarters?)
- 20 - estate entrance road (a: dirt; b: cobbled)



= confirmed



= estimated or conjectural

Maureen



RECEIVED
MAR 24 1986

Maryland Historical Trust

March 18, 1986

Division of Archeology

Mr. Dale Hutchison
Director of Planning
The Maryland-National Capital Park and
Planning Commission
County Administration Building
Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772

RE: Concept Plan for PortAmerica
Development Project, Oxon Hill,
Maryland

Dear Mr. Hutchison:

This agency has reviewed the concept plan for the PortAmerica project submitted to your office by James T. Lewis Enterprises, Ltd. (Capital Enterprises No. 2 Limited Partnership). Based upon our review, we are concerned with the proposed project's effect on historic properties, specifically the Oxon Hill Manor, a property listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and the Addison House Archeological Site which has also been determined to be eligible for listing on the National Register. We are particularly concerned that the concept plan nowhere addresses the proposed developments' effect on these historic resources. Our concerns and recommendations are outlined below.

First, it is clear from the information presented in the Concept Plan that the proposed 52 story World Trade Center, the 15 story office structure complex to its east and possibly other structures would be visible from Oxon Hill Manor. The introduction of such visually out of character elements into the environment would dramatically alter the views from Oxon Hill Manor and thus have an adverse effect on the integrity of its setting, feeling and association with the historic landscape in which it is located. Earlier reviews of this project by the MNCPPC, the National Park Service and the National Capital Planning Commission all recommended that the views and vistas from Oxon Hill Manor should be preserved. We strongly concur with and support this recommendation.

Second, the PortAmerica property contains in its northeast portion the archeological remains of the 1710 Addison House and its associated outbuildings, cemetery, mausoleum, and other features, as well as, possibly, the grave of John Hanson, first president of the United States under the Articles of Confederation, who died there in 1783. The history of this site, coupled with data obtained during recent archeological investigations conducted by the Federal Highway Administration within a portion of the site prior to construction of the "S-Curve" roadway linking I-95 and Oxon Hill Road, indicates that the archeological remains present there are among the most significant in Maryland. It should be noted that the site has been determined to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and is listed in the Prince George's County Historic Sites and Districts Plan as a component of the Oxon Hill Manor Site (Inventory No. 80-1, p. 70). It is clear from the concept plan that all elements of the Addison House Archeological Site would be destroyed by the proposed construction and landscaping.

Mr. Dale Hutchison
March 18, 1986
Page Two

Based upon the concerns outlined above, it is our recommendation that the PortAmerica Concept Plan not be approved unless it is modified to ensure the protection of historic and archeological resources. These modifications should ensure that the following conditions are met:


1. The height of all buildings will be restricted so as to preserve the integrity of the still-existing historic views from Oxon Hill Manor.
2. Prior to initiation of any ground disturbing activity in the northeast portion of the project area, all significant components of the Addison House Archeological Site will be identified and an appropriate plan to mitigate the adverse effects of the proposed development upon those resources will be developed. This plan should, as a first option, preserve in-place and interpret the identified archeological remains. If preservation in-place is not possible, an appropriate plan of archeological data recovery will be developed and carried out.

If these conditions are fulfilled, we would have no objection to approval of the Concept Plan.

Finally, we note that the Concept Plan proposes roadway connections to Interstate Routes 95 and 295, and that extensive dredging and filling operations will take place in Smoot Bay. As all of these undertakings require the obtaining of Federal licenses and permits, it should be noted that the responsible Federal agencies will be required under the National Historic Preservation Act to consider the effect of their actions on the National Register listed and eligible resources within the project area. In order to facilitate this Federal review process, it is in the best interest of the developer to ensure that adequate consideration of historic and archeological resources is a part of all development plans. As the state agency responsible for assisting and advising the responsible Federal agencies, we would be happy to work with the MNCPPC, the developer and any other involved parties in developing appropriate measures to ensure the protection of historic and archeological resources.

If I can provide additional information you may require, please feel free to call me or my staff archeologist, Richard Hughes, at 269-2438. Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,



J. Rodney Little
Director
State Historic Preservation
Officer

JRL/RBH/hec

cc: Ms. Gail Rothrock
Mr. Alan Feinberg
Mr. Tyler Bastian
Mrs. Sara Walton
Mr. W. Dickerson Charlton
Mr. Ronald Anzalone

TORREY C. BROWN, M.D.
SECRETARY

JOHN R. GRIFFIN
DEPUTY SECRETARY

STATE OF MARYLAND
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
MARYLAND GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

THE ROTUNDA
711 W. 40TH STREET, SUITE 440
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21211

KENNETH N. WEAVER
DIRECTOR
MARYLAND GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
EMERY T. CLEAVES
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Division of Archeology
338-7236

21 March 1986

Mr. Dale Hutchison
Director of Planning
Maryland-National Capital Planning
Commission
County Administration Building
Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772

RE: Port America impact on important
archeological site

Dear Mr. Hutchison:

Among the most important archeological sites in Maryland is the Addison or Oxon Hill plantation site in southern Prince Georges County. The manor house was one of the earliest and largest in tidewater Maryland and Virginia, and, as revealed by the historical and archeological record, was associated with many outlying storage structures, housing for assistants and slaves, and a formal garden. The site is especially remarkable for its exceptionally good state of preservation as a result of the site having been abandoned and unused since late in the last century when the manor house burned.

In recognition of the importance and uniqueness of Oxon Hill to Maryland history and archeology, the State Highway Administration has funded a series of archeological investigations within the relatively small portion of the site to be impacted by the proposed new I-95/MD 210 interchange. The report on this work is currently being revised in response to reviewers' comments and should be available in final form from the State Highway Administration within a few months. The findings documented in the report further substantiate the importance of Oxon Hill and emphasize the even greater potential of the remainder of the site including the manor house site itself, most of the formal garden, several outbuildings, slave quarters, and family cemetery.

The Port America concept plan by James T. Lewis Enterprises, Ltd., recently submitted to your office, does not consider the deleterious impact of the project on the important archeological resources at Oxon Hill. In view of the special importance of the site to Prince Georges County and Maryland, it is essential that some plan be developed to conserve as much of the site as possible, preferably by avoidance, or, alternatively, by selected data recovery prior to the start of development. The implications of this request for the developer's plans and costs are considerable but Port America may be able to turn site conservation to their advantage through tax savings, sales promotions, and favorable publicity.

Oxon Hill is a singular, nonrenewable resource that cannot be duplicated elsewhere in the county or state or possibly even in the tidewater region. Official recognition of the importance of the site is attested to by the commitment of the Highway Administration to conserve as much as possible by alignment modification, plans for a retaining wall to protect the manor house site, and data recovery in areas that could not be avoided.

Please let me know how I can work with you to facilitate protection of the unique record at Oxon Hill.

Sincerely,

Tyler Bastian
State Archeologist

TB:lw

cc: Allen Feinberg
Gail Rothrock
J. Rodney Little

*AP of:
letter*

*melting
w/ Rita
on Nov 27, 1984*

500

8 mch. exc.
120 - samples
12 record + clean
200 record features
100
100
100
500

22

	Size of Area	person-days/m ²	estimated person-days (7.1hr)	% total field time	contractor days (8 hr)
Area I	400m ²	4	1600	14.8%	864
→ Area II	40m ²	4*	164	1.5	888
Area III	35m ²	4*	144	1.3	76
Area IV	1000m ²	0.69**	690	6.4	374
Area V	15m ²	4	60	.6	35
<i>fentative</i> Area VIa	900	3 3*	2700	25.0	1457
	b	2*	1350	12.5	730
	c	4	900	8.4	489.5
	d	4	900	8.4	489.5
	e	2*	450	4.3	245.5
Area I & IIa	450	4	1800	16.8	979
			10758	100.0%	5827.5

Recommended number of hours: 76381.8

Total number of contractor hr: 46620

29761.8

* includes monitoring mechanical stripping

** area sampled ~~only~~; also includes mechanical stripping



Maryland Historical Trust

April 28, 1986

Mr. Louis H. Ege, Jr.
Deputy Director
Division of Project Development
State Highway Administration
P. O. Box 717
707 North Calvert Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21203-0717

RE: F.A.P. No. I-95-3 (75) 3
Contract No. P 878-255-372
Modification to the Interchange
of I-95 (Capital Beltway)
Maryland Route 210 and I-295
HEP-MD2

Dear Mr. Ege:

My staff archeologists have reviewed the above-referenced draft report prepared by Garrow and Associates, Inc. for the above-referenced project. Based on this review we find that the level of data recovery accomplished was sufficient to fulfill the requirements outlined in the determination of no adverse effect and in the Guidelines for Archeological Investigations in Maryland. The consultant has, overall, succeeded in synthesizing a massive quantity of data into a potentially useful and important document which will serve as an invaluable reference source for future researchers. We do, however, feel that the report in its current form does not adequately represent the high level of work which was performed in earlier phases of the project. The areas of the draft report which we believe need revision and/or amplification are outlined below.

We believe that two basic weaknesses in the underlying methodology used in analyzing the data and in preparing the report and its conclusions should be addressed. First, the research goals outlined in Chapter 2 are not the same as, nor are they linked in the report in any meaningful manner to, the research themes addressed in Chapter 4 - Historical Background. Second, the overall reliance on the mean ceramic dating formula for temporal determinations rather than a more flexible use of terminus ante and post quem dates causes problems in the interpretation of a site (and its features) which is clearly multi-component in nature. These two primary concerns with the draft report, as well as a number of secondary suggestions for revisions, are addressed in detail below. We have organized our comments by Chapter heading for convenience.

I. Introduction

1. The introduction should contain a physical description and brief history of Oxon Hill Manor. The geographical limits of the project area should be clearly distinguished from the limits of Oxon Hill Manor as an historical entity (plantation) at particular temporal periods. At this point it would be helpful to the reader if a map or maps showing the relationship of the project area to modern physical features and the historical Oxon Hill Manor plantation was presented.
2. Problems of scheduling could be relegated to appropriate sections of the text. For example, the problem of clearing the site could be discussed in the chapter on field results.
3. A brief summary of previous archeological work should precede the technical discussion of the 6 areas slated for investigation (1.5-11). The verbal description of these areas should include a physical description (e.g. size), and the relationship to the whole Manor complex, preferably with an accompanying plan view.
4. A brief statement should be added to the conclusion (pl.11) that comparative data from historical studies of plantations and their economics, as well as excavation of plantation sites in the Middle Atlantic region, will also be presented.

II. Research Goals and Ch. IV Historical Background

1. The presentation of previous investigations should not be limited to site specific data. A summary of previous archeological work in the larger context of Maryland and of the Middle Atlantic region as a whole is needed for both the prehistoric and historic periods. Of particular concern is the absence of a summary of previous archeological work on plantation sites. It would be helpful to discuss the ways in which the time period, level of investigations and research interests of, for example, Monticello, Shirley, the Dickinson Mansion, Beverly, Drayton Hall projects differ from or resemble the Oxon Hill Manor Project.

It is difficult to see how Hypothesis 1 could be tested without a clear delineation of the specific ways a "Georgian" plantation differs, say, from a 17th C. plantation or an antebellum plantation in both purely historical and archeological views.

2. Hypothesis 1 and the "Georgian mind set" illustrate one of the chief weaknesses of the draft. The goals proposed in Chapter II, Research Goals, and the research themes stated in Chapter IV, Historical

Background (see p. IV.1) are not well integrated. Although the chapter on research goals (p.11.9-10) leads the reader to expect the historical background to demonstrate the acceptance of the Georgian mind set by the 18th C. inhabitants, the chapter on historical background avoids the issue of "mind sets" and their incorporation into material culture entirely. Not only is the Georgian mind set left undefined until the Conclusions (p. X.1), but pre-Georgian and post-Georgian (Federal, Southern ?) mind sets are not discussed. Instead, we find "labor systems" as one of 3 principal themes of Chapter IV with many pages devoted to the organization and development of agricultural labor in the 19th C. Nowhere in Chapter IV or elsewhere in the draft are the archeological implications of this information presented and developed. The potential is there for the massive amount of quantitative information to be summarized to demonstrate, say, a "Southern" mind set against which the "Georgian" mind set could be measured, but this is not done and the reader is left to wonder why the information was included.

Rhys Isaac's The Transformation of Virginia, 1740 to 1790 (Institute of American History and Culture: Williamsburg, 1982) is an excellent treatment of the Georgian mind set by an historian. We recommend that this work be consulted and used in the research goals and the historical background to develop a framework within which the field and analytical results can be interpreted.

3. On p IV. 40 it is stated that the implications of the foregoing analysis of colonial Maryland, Prince George's County and other regions will be more fully addressed in the chapter dealing with site-specific research. The reader finds no such separate chapter, although perhaps pp IV. 53-62 and IV. 137-145 are intended to serve this role. However, the implications are not discussed in these sections. The site-specific information is purely descriptive and is not used to predict or interpret archeological resources.
4. In ch. IV, the more general historical background and the site specific historic background are presented in different time intervals. The general section uses temporal divisions based on wars (e.g. American Revolution, Civil War) and the site-specific section uses temporal divisions based on owners of Oxon Hill Manor (e.g. Walter Delaney Addison, Thomas and Zacharia Berry). As a result the reader finds it difficult to place the more site specific detail into a general framework. For example, Table IV-2 presents number of slaves as a means of understanding the 18th C. social order. Later, on p IV.41 ff, the section on Ownership and Status, the number of slaves at Oxon Hill Manor in 1727 appears in the text, but table IV-2 is not referred to to tell the reader where, in quantitative terms, Oxon

Hill Manor stood in the social order in terms of the number of slaves. The general information and the site specific information need better intergration to make the historical background more accessible to the reader.

5. The historic maps reproduced in the text, as figs. IV-5, IV-6, IV-12, IV-13, are not sufficiently legible. In view of the fact that land use patterns are important to this study, we recommend that in addition to the reproductions, these maps (or relevent sections) be redrawn at a larger scale and with pertinent features labeled or highlighted. Locating the project area on these maps, perhaps by shading, would also be helpful to the reader.
6. In the light of Hypothesis 4, pII. 13, we recommend that the chapter on historical background provide a discussion of 18th C. vs 19th C. marketing choices. We have some concern with the assumption that Baltimore as a nearby marketing center would provide goods from a restricted range of sources. What sources were used to develop this hypothesis?
7. On p. IV-186, the Chain of Title cites secondary sources rather than a liber and folio number which would enable the reader to check the original document. For example, the source of the first item is given as Mackintosh, 1974:75 and Maryland Historical Trust, Annapolis. Again, if the Maryland State Archives is meant, as we assume it is, the liber and folio should be cited. Further, a distinction should be made in the references between the papers and records of the Chancery Court of Maryland and that of Prince George's County.
8. Because of the length of ch. IV, it would be helpful to the reader if a summary of the historical background as it specifically relates to the research goals were added to the end of this chapter.

Ch VI. Field Results

1. The reader's understanding of the 6 areas would be enhanced by the inclusion of a map (see ch. I. comment 3) showing how these areas relate to the plantation as a whole. For example, area 1 is said (p IV.1) to be north of the main house foundation but this foundation is not shown on fig IV.1.
2. It would be helpful if more significant features were highlighted or labeled on the plan views of the areas. At present it is difficult, for example, to locate the unlined well on fig IV.4.
3. The interpretation of the date of construction and function of

structures on the basis of postholes on pp VI. 19-24 and VII.185 is confusing. Surely placement and alignment should have precedence over both artifact patterning and mean ceramic dates in identifying structures. The artifact content reflects what was present in the yard area prior to digging and refilling of holes for posts. It is not clear from the discussion why doubt exists as to the event when the artifacts entered the posthole. If the features show signs of replacement or rebuilding, this should be discussed in the text.

It is not clear why the greater depth of the postholes of the fenceline indicate that they postdate any landscaping. Could they not have been deeper originally?

The statement on p VI.27 that the orientation of the cellar structure and many of the postholes is evidence of formal organization for structures near the main house needs further elaboration, especially in view of the interpretive problems presented by the postholes.

4. On p IV.68 the cellar is dated to the 1880's on the basis of a 3 piece mold bottle. More specific information would be useful here, especially as some 3 piece molds are known (although rare) as early as the late 18th C. (H. McKearin and K.M. Wilson, American Bottles and Flasks, 1978, p.14) If this bottle is illustrated in the report, the figure number should be included. It would be helpful to have a fuller description of the bottle, along with the illustration and the source used for dating.
5. In area VIa, the two trench features are interpreted as a palisade or compound (VI. 73). If no traces of post moulds or decayed wood remain in the soil, what evidence is there to suggest this interpretation?
6. At the end of this section it would be helpful to include a map of the project area showing structures and land use patterns at different temporal periods based on the field results. A presentation in graphic form would make this information more accessible to the reader.

Ch VII. Artifact Analysis Results

1. On p VII.2, the discussion of the early date of the cellar in Area I should include the possibility of a late 18th C. structure, which may have been rebuilt (or undergone multiple rebuildings) prior to 1863, as well as the possibility of landscaping the side yard.
2. In the discussion of the artifacts from the cellar in area 1 (p.p.VI. 14-23) three contexts are mentioned. It would be helpful to the

reader if these contexts could be discussed together with the level numbers they represent to permit reference to the profile in fig. VII.9.

3. We suggest that artifact drawings and photographs be presented with the appropriate level number or depositional context, in addition to the feature. This would increase the scholarly value of the report by providing the reader with the opportunity to date artifacts not usually provided in readily obtainable references. For example, we find on p VII. 51 the statement, "Dates were not available for the 6 buckles or buckle fragments recovered from the well." These buckles, illustrated in Fig VII. 23, are identified in the caption as from the area 1 well. Were not ceramic dates available for the levels in which these buckles were found? Illustrating these buckles from dateable contexts would provide other archeologists with information additional to that of Merry W. Abbitt, "The Eighteenth-Century Shoe Buckle," in Five Artifact Studies, (The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation: Williamsburg, 1973).
4. Analyses, such as the Wise Analysis on p. VII. 112, should be followed by a brief statement making clear what the analysis tells us about status, dating, etc. and how the analysis relates to the stated research goals of the project.

Comparison with the results of other plantation sites is also needed. We find, for example, on p.VII. 112 that "the Wise analysis method suffers from a relative dearth of comparative examples against which the Oxon Hill data could be measured." What, precisely, does "relative dearth" mean? Has the Wise analysis been used for any other 18th C. plantation sites? If not, do the reports from other sites provide information which could be used by the Oxon Hill Manor researchers to develop a comparative Wise analysis for specific features on these other sites?

At present, Ch. V Field and Laboratory Methods contains no discussion of which analytical techniques were used on other plantation sites, how successful the results were in meeting the stated goals and how their assemblages could be compared to Oxon Hill Manor. Some discussion along these lines, either in ch. V or VII is necessary to place the Oxon Hill results in perspective.

5. The estate inventory analysis follows area 1 and precedes the analysis of the other 5 areas. What is the reason for this?

The problems of terminology, etc. encountered in using inventories to study material culture are not unique to the Oxon Hill Project

as might be supposed from pp VII, 113-114. The work of previous researchers should be consulted and acknowledged in the text. We recommend consultation with the Maryland Historical Society on these problems. The curators at the MHS are not only actively studying Maryland inventories, but can provide references on terminology.

Further, re p VIII, 113, the Maryland Historical Trust does not serve as a repository of primary records such as inventories. Presumably the Maryland State Archives is meant here. Greater care should be taken to provide the correct citations for documentary research.

6. On p. VII, 114, it is noted that no shoes, cloth, bedding etc. were included in the inventory analysis. The reason for this should be given. The reader finds it difficult at present to see the justification for this omission since shoes and cloth were in fact recovered from the excavations.
7. At present, neither Chapter V-Methodology, nor Chapter VII-Artifact Analysis Results contain a discussion of the way marketing patterns are to be studied. Presumably they must be studied in order to test Hypothesis IV (p 11. 13). We noted a similar absence of background on marketing patterns in ch. IV-Historical Background. Again, all of the chapters need better integration with the stated research goals of the project.

Review of the References cited gives little indication of effort to determine the geographic range of origin of goods (mentioned as necessary to test Hypothesis IV on p. 11. 13). Again, we recommend that the curators of glass and ceramics at the Maryland Historical Society be consulted for advice and appropriate references to identify local products. This will avoid the problem of tentative attribution to Baltimore, as for example, the sunburst flask cited on pp VII. 201 ff attributed to Baltimore on the basis of McKearin and McKearin (1941). Local studies, such as Dwight P. Lannon, "The Baltimore Glass Trade 1780 to 1820, Winterthur Portfolio 5 (1969) 15-48 have been done and should be referred to.

8. On p VII. 151, the conclusion that the inventories suggest that the estate declined between 1727 and 1765 needs more discussion. Are similar changes in the ceramics/glass ratio observable from other archeological sites of this period? Our concern is that while decline of the family's fortune may account for this change, other, more regional, explanations should be given consideration. Could, for example, this decline be related to the decline of the tobacco

economy in Maryland and Virginia? The historic background should be integrated into the other chapters of the report to provide a less particularistic focus to the data.

9. The premise stated on p VII. 151 concerning what constitutes a "normal" ceramic assemblage on 18th C. sites needs a reference (or references). Data from other plantation sites concerning ceramic to metal table service ratios should be included for comparison.
10. We are particularly concerned by the statement p VII. 151 that "at this time it is not known if the Oxon Hill households were typical of families that enjoyed extremely high socioeconomic status." This statement illustrates a basic problem both with the research goals and with the background research. Should not the function of the background research be to develop a framework, both historical and archeological, within which the Oxon Hill material could be placed? The failure to provide such a framework is a major fault of the draft and should be remedied.
11. The chapter on artifact Analysis Results should conclude with a brief summary making clear to what extent the research goals have been met. The reader is led to expect a summary or synthesis by statements such as that on p VII. 95, "The composition of the vessel sample, and its implications for studying the socioeconomic level of the household that generated these artifacts will be discussed in a later section of this chapter." The reader could not identify the section intended here; if included, we recommend that the page or section number be added to this sentence for the reader's convenience.

Ch. X. Conclusions

1. The "Georgian mind set" should be defined earlier in the report, either in the chapter on research goals or in the chapter on historical research.
2. It would be easier for the reader to visualize the patterns of landuse revealed by the excavations if the results were presented graphically, as well as verbally, in plan view "reconstructions" of the plantation at different temporal periods. It would also be helpful if comparison were made to other "Georgian" plantations to establish what is typical/unique about 18th C. Oxon Hill in that context.
3. The Artifact Patterns presented in Table X-1 seem to suggest that Oxon Hill is a single component site. The artifact patterns should be presented by whatever temporal units are chosen for the historical

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research section.

4. The 18th C. component of hypothesis IV could presumably be demonstrated. This section should be expanded.
5. The reviewer does not agree that the success of the current project cannot be judged on the ability of the project to meet the stated research design. (X-14). The research design as presented in the original proposal and in the research goals could have been modified in minor ways to increase its applicability to the archeological data. It appears that the major reason for the failure of the project to meet the goals is not lack of data, but lack of integration of the literature search, both historical and archeological (which is particularly inadequate) with the stated research goals of the project. A review of the appropriate archeological literature is conspicuous by its absence. Data sets have been produced by previous archeological investigations of plantation sites. Comparison of the Oxon Hill material with these data sets is, we believe, possible. The failure to do so is, we contend, a major reason for the failure of the draft to fulfill or at least partially fulfill the stated research goals.

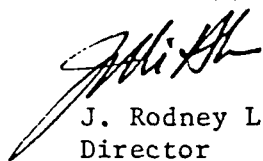
Our final comment concerns what we perceive to be a general weakness in the draft report relating to the overall integration of the various chapters or sections into a coherent, organized whole. The problems outlined above seem to stem at least partially from the different researchers pursuing different goals or addressing varying research themes. The report's editors have done a generally admirable job of synthesizing the immense mass of data, but some problems of overall integration and of a lack of still necessary additional data, particularly comparative archeological data, indicate that the time allocated for analysis and report writing was probably too short. We indicated as early as September 18, 1984, in our letter to your office regarding our review of the submitted technical proposals that we felt that the ratio of number of laboratory/analysis/report writing hours to fieldwork hours was, in our opinion, too low. We feel that this short time schedule is at least partially responsible for the problems outlined above. All concerned parties should make every effort to ensure that this issue is thoroughly addressed before undertaking future projects.

I hope you will find these comments useful. If you have any questions, please contact me or Ethel R. Eaton of our staff at (301) 269-2438.

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We look forward to receiving a copy of the revised final report.

Sincerely,



J. Rodney Little
Director
State Historic Preservation Officer

JRL/RBH/ERE/mmc

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